SOUTH VIET NAM In Struggle

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CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE SOUTH VIET NAM NATIONAL FRONT FOR LIBERATION

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editorial

Mr Nixon's "Serious Negotiation" Claim

MR NIXON has given a new proof of his "goodwill for peace" and "serious negotiation." He ordered the head of the US delegation to put off the Paris Conference on Viet Nam. In taking up such an off hand attitude, he claimed that what he had in mind was to do something to take the negotiations out of their deadlock. Undoubtedly Mr Nixon has become a past master in double-talk. Let us have a look at his words and deeds.

To secure his presidential seat, Mr Nixon gave his electors a promise to end the war in six months. Six months after he entered the White House he spawned the "Vietnamization" strategy, which is in essence a strategy to prolong and extend the war of aggression in Viet Nam and Indochina. Nineteen billion dollars have been spent per month in Viet Nam on Mr Nixon's war in Viet Nam. War expenditures in Laos and Cambodia are higher than under Johnson: 600 million dollars and three billion dollars a year respectively. Mr Nixon has had 7 million tons of bombs dropped on the Indochinese battlefields whereas Mr Johnson used only 6 million tons for the whole length of his term.

With regard to North Viet Nam alone, since Mr Nixon became boss of the White House, that is, after the United States pledged to unconditionally halt the bombing and all other war acts against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, the Nixon administration has had 65,000 sorties flown over North Viet Nam, and 4,000 aerial strikes carried out against populated areas there.

More recently, while Mr Nixon in his high-resounding "peace" speeches talked of "building a new order in the world in which nations and peoples can live together in peace, respecting one another," the number of aircraft-carriers off the Vietnamese seacoast was doubled and so was the number of strategic B.52s, and 150 new fighters and bombers were added to the US air fleet. Likewise, right since Mr Nixon announced the US desire to make contributions to the relaxation of tension in Asia and the world," and insisted that his 8-point peace plan should be regarded as "a basis for the attainment of that objective" in negotiation, 125,000 more tons of bombs have been poured on Viet Nam and other Indochinese countries.

LET us now examine Mr Nixon's "serious negotiation" claim. Many "peace" plans have been advanced by him, the most typical one being his 8 points. What are those 8 points in essence? A move to compel the Vietnamese people to lay down their weapons and accept US neo-colonialism. What a wild dream! With half-a-million GIs and nearly a million Saigon and other satellite troops, and 200 billion dollars in war expenditures including the cost of 13 million tons of bombs, previous American governments were unable to reach their target; one wonders what Mr Nixon may expect to obtain with his spurious 8 point "peace" plan.

Mr Nixon is still nurturing the hope of a military decision and trying to force the South Vietnamese people into the US neo-colonialist orbit. Consequently at the Paris Conference on Viet Nam up to now, the US side has set its face against all reasonable and sensible proposals of the Provisional Revolutionary Government and exerted all efforts to undermine a sound settlement of the South Viet Nam issue.

This has been fully borne out by the very course of the Conference since Mr Nixon's advent to power. He downgraded it by withdrawing the US head of delegation Cabot Lodge (November 1969). When, under strong public pressure, he was compelled to name Mr Bruce to replace Mr Lodge in August 1970, he entrusted him with the only task of filling a vacancy. In September 1971, William Porter was sent to Paris to relieve David Bruce. He has proved to be a right man — a faithful replica of Nixon the aggressor and tricky poker player. On the US President's order, he has continually made use of provocative methods to aggravate the impasse of the Conference. He has set a record for short speeches — one of these consisting only of three lines. In an insolent language, he urged that the Vietnamese people re-examine their posture on the battlefield, right at a moment when the US-Saigon troops were being clobbered by patriotic forces. He broke the record for US boycott of the Conference sessions: in five months as head of the US delegation, he stayed away from six meetings. So Mr Nixon's "goodwill for peace and serious negotiation" has been made clear.

US sabotage of the Paris Conference has been systematic. W. Porter's new move is by no means an extraordinary expression of his mental unbalance. It is but a link of a chain. What is to be stressed is its unprecedentedly dangerous character since it constitutes a particularly heavy blow at the Paris peace parley.

At a previous session of the conference, the US side had raised the "POW" issue and overbearingly asked for a response "without delay." At the 147th session the same issue came up and the US side declared it would not attend the next sessions unless that issue was "seriously negotiated." US insolence, of course, is too blatant to be overlooked: what has given the Nixon administration the right to impose on the Paris Conference an issue raised by the sole US side? Who has empowered it to lay down conditions for the Vietnamese side.

LET us consider the "POW" issue. In its 7-point peace initiative the PRG has clearly proposed:

"If the US government fixes a date for the withdrawal from South Viet Nam in 1971 of the totality

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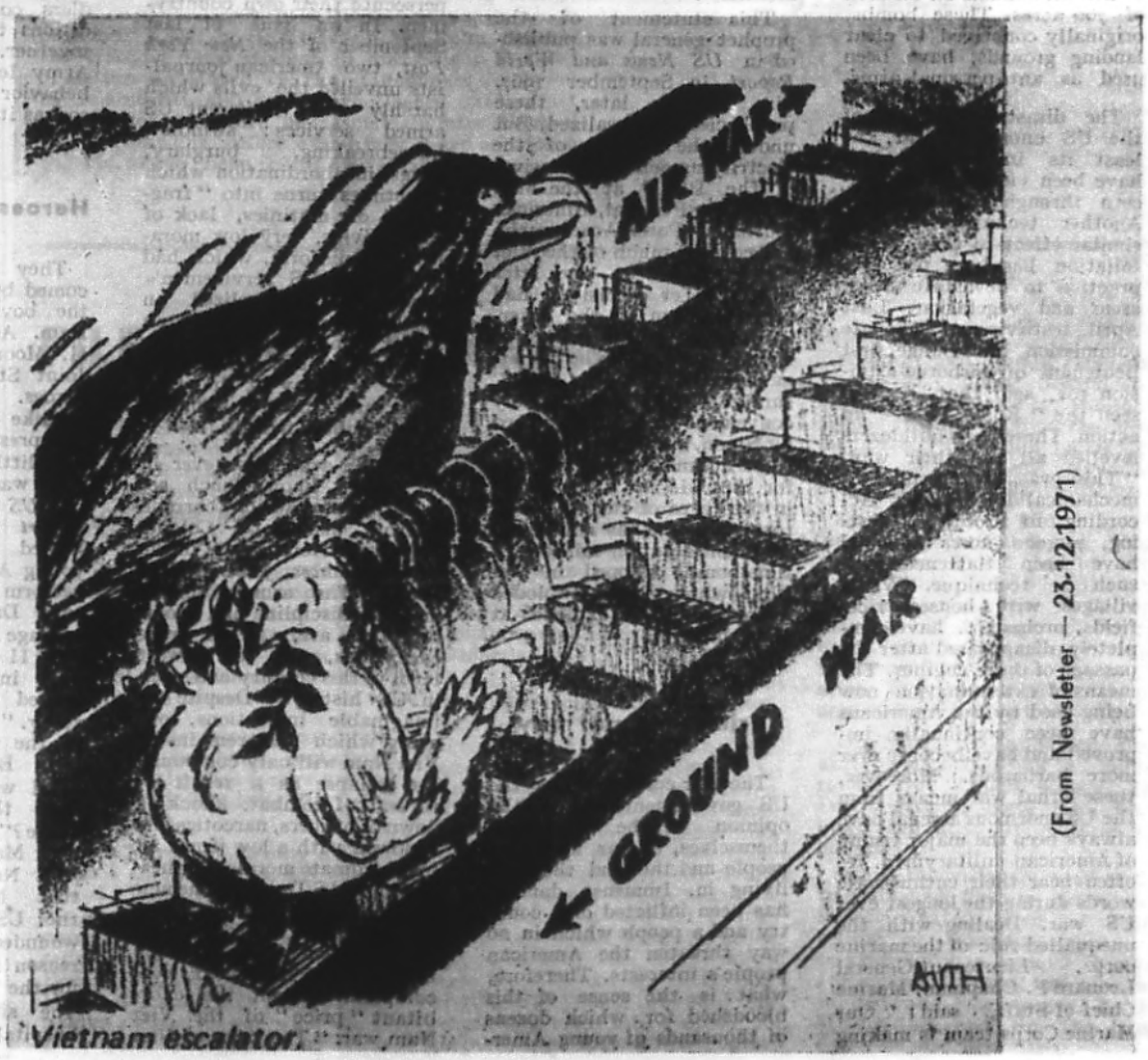

Vietnam escalator.

(From Newsletter — 23-12-1971)

US bombs fall in Viet Nam

but their craters are dug at the Pentagon

WILL millions of tons of US bombs rained on Viet Nam explode in delayed action at the Pentagon? The question is not so foolish as one might think. Even many high-ranking American officers ask themselves the question. This may be one of the most unexpected and spectacular consequences of the most unpopular and controversial war conducted by the US.

Craters which can gird the Earth, if put side by side

A bomb of 500 or 750 pounds dig a hole of about 15m in diameter and 10 m in depth. In 1967 and 1968, more than 3,500,000 such bombs were dropped on Viet Nam. A simple calculation shows that these bomb craters put together side by side will form a ditch of over 50,000km, longer than the perimeter of the Earth. To fill up these craters, whose area totals about 100,000 acres, we need over 2 billion cubic metres of earth. These are the figures given by a group of American biological researchers of Standford University. They have strikingly testified to the ferocity of the US war in Viet Nam.

Not only bombs but also other most sophisticated means of destruction have been used against a people and its natural environment. It is in Viet Nam that the biggest kinds of bombs have been used. According to two American professors, Westing (Windham University, Vermont) and Pfeiffer (Montana University) who have made several fact-finding tours of South Viet Nam, these 15,000-pound bombs are able to kill all animals on an area of 760 acres. These bombs, originally conceived to clear landing grounds, have been used as anti-personal arms.

The disastrous effects of the US cnemical war, at least its immediate ones, have been viewed with concern throughout the world. Another technique with a similar effect to that of defoliation has been put into practice to devastate large areas and vegetation. Last April, testifying at a Senate commission, Sam Bunge, first lieutenant of Airborne Division 101, said that he had seen the "Rome Plow" in action. These huge bulldozers levelled all on their way. "This was," he said, "a mechanical defoliation." According to Professor Westing, 750,000 acres of land have been flattened with such a technique. Whole villages with houses, ricefields, orchards... have completely disappeared after the passage of these engines. The means of extermination now being used by the Americans have been continually improved and have become ever more barbarous. Moreover, these lethal war means from the US enormous arsenal have always been the major trump of American militarymen. We often hear their enthusiastic words during the longest ever US war. Dealing with the unequalled role of the marine corps, Lieutenant-General Leonard F. Chapman, Marine Chief-of-Staff, said: "Our Marine Corps team is making its unique contribution to the over-all effort in Viet Nam. Most important in my mind, is the fact that we have chosen the battlefield and intend to fight on our terms. The Vietcongs must either fight us where we want to fight or quit the field and let us consolidate our perimeter unconstested" The Air Force also claims its preponderant role in an eventual victory. "It is true that the guerilla war must be won finally on the ground. But it is equally true that this war cannot be won without air power. Air power will point the way toward victory." The Infantry of course will not remain silent. General Johnson, Chief-of-Staff of the ground forces, stated: "We are definitively winning in Viet Nam and I say that for this reason. There has been a market turnabout in most areas of the country in the last year. I recently return from my 8th visit to Viet Nam... then I believe we will see some real evidence of progress in the next few months".

This statement of the prophet general was published in *US News and World Report* in September 1967. Six months later, these prophecies were realized. But under the form... of the electrifying general offensives of the PLAF at the Mau Than Tet Festival, American journalist Peter Arnett, who had covered much of the Viet Nam war, had to say later that the Tet offensives had clearly shown to the American that it was time for them to pack up. The "Vietnamization of the war" surely will be an extremely convenient receipt invented by Nixon, a genius who wants to be a candidate of "peace for the GIs in Viet Nam" in the eyes of the US electorate. But he has not taken into consideration millions of time-bombs dropped in Viet Nam which have exploded and continue to explode at the Pentagon.

Crimes do not pay

The war conducted by the US government is, in the opinion of the Americans themselves, a war against a people and the land they are living in. Immense damage has been inflicted on a country and a people which in no way threaten the American people's interests. Therefore, what is the sense of this bloodshed for which dozens of thousands of young Americans have fallen? The fatalities are not at all unilateral and the aggressors have not been spared. The GIs digging in in most solid bunkers in Khe Sanh, Chu Lai and all other parts of this burning land of Viet Nam have realized that they have not been waging the same type of war as Frederic March or Clark Gable in Hollywood. *Life*, in an issue in 1969, published the following lines addressed to the journal by a young American of the US expeditionary corps: "I grew up on a diet of Hollywood war films. The heroism, the romance, the adventures and even the death excited my interest... When I entered the service, I was astonished that no Fr. Marches, Clark Gables, Humphrey Bogarts were to be in my barracks. Only young kids like myself (17) half frightened, confused, immature kids stumbling through the senselessness of combat."

Instead of cinema heroes, these greenhorns have become heroes of another kind: gangsters in uniforms who persecute their own countrymen. In an issue of last September of the *New York Post*, two American journalists unveiled the evils which harshly affect different US armed services: swindles, housebreaking, burglary, drugs, insubordination which sometimes turns into "fragging" or mutinies, lack of combativity, very low morale... The uniform, which had for several US servicemen's generations symbolized an ideal, has now become an abject thing. Many GIs have been seeking by all means to throw it away at the first opportunity before rejoining their civilian friends.

The US army has never in its history known such serious diseases which corrode it from inside. US Colonel Robert D. Heinl wrote in the *Armed Forces Journal* last June: The armed forces' morale, discipline and combativity are, with rare exceptions, at the lowest level in this century and even in US history: "Despite all imaginable indications, our army which still remains in Viet Nam will only compound its collapse as a result of refusal of combat, knocking down of officers, narcotics and endowed with a low if not an insubordinate morale." General Michael S.Davison, the new Commander-in-Chief of the US forces in Europe, who had directed US aggression in Cambodia last year, now complained about the exorbitant "price" of the Viet Nam war: "The price of Vietnam war has been a terrible one. In terms of casualties, in terms of national treasure of both men and dollars. It as a terrible price the Army had to pay." Reporting on the war he has been taking part in in Viet Nam, Captain W. Miller wrote to his parents: "Never have the Americans been so unhappily misused. We are involved in an interminable war. We are in fact losing all our international prestige." Seeing the Viet Nam war's tragic consequences for the US, Donovan, a former Marine Colonel said in his book *American Militarism* 1970: "The Viet Nam war has destroyed this unfortunate country and at the same time the foundations of our own society. Our military position itself has been shaken." General William Wallace Ford shared the same view: "The Viet Nam war has split our people and depleted our military strength." The *New York Post* wrote last September: "Duty, honour, country. Where are the old values — the thing old soldiers counted on, the traditions that held the Army together. Not here. As the Army leaves Viet Nam, its behavior has changed — and so has its appearance"...

Heroes without a job

They are new men welcomed by American mothers, the boys back from Viet Nam. According to Thomas H. Moorer, Chief of the US Joint Staffs, they must be heroes. At least once, this warlike admiral criticized the press for having spoken too little of the heroes of this war. In a statement to *US News and World Report* last April, he affirmed that "every day young Americans in uniform perform extremely heroic acts. Daily they do feats of courage that during World War II certainly would have been in the headlines and lauded by a grateful citizenry." "We are aware of the reason of this omission. But what treatment shall we give those heroes once they have returned home?", asked I.F. Stone last May. John Kerry, a Viet Nam veteran revealed that hospitals throughout the US did not meet the wounded's needs. The only reason is the lack of credits for the building of hospitals. The situation of military hospitals and their care to the wounded are so depressing that 57 per cent of those under treatment there speak about suicide.

According to the *New York Times* of October 19, 1971, Nixon has turned down the 105 million dollar request of both Houses for the building of more hospitals for the wounded.

As for those who still are sound of limb, a serious problem must be solved: the search for a job. At least 13 per cent of the Viet Nam veterans are now unemployed. Their living conditions are so critical that Democratic Senator Alan Cranston last year had to set up a Senate sub-committee to draw the whole people's attention to the lot of hundreds of thousands of young veterans who are now out in the cold searching for a job because the country has been in a recession caused by the war they were asked to fight.

Discontent is mounting among American youths which realize that all their dreams have been shattered by the Viet Nam policy of their government. "The Viet Nam war, said US Colonel Donovan, and its significance for the American youth are the fundamental cause of their revolt. This is the most doubtful war in our history. It disturbs their plans. They have to interrupt their careers, put off their marriage plans, lose their limbs and lives, all for one of the most uncertain aims. As a result, the military establishment, asserted Donovan, has become target of a new anti-militarist wave by the youths who are the most important public for the militarymen. In spite of all that has been said, the Pentagon must feel the impact of bombs it thought it could dump with impunity 10,000km from its precincts."

HO MAI

IN THE CITIES

THE Thieu clique brought on March 23, 10 pupils and students to the military court. They were among the 60 Saigon school mates arbitrarily taken into custody since last October by the quisling authorities for opposition to the US-Thieu election farce.

Before the Saigon troops and police agents' bayonets and guns, all the arraigned students and pupils remained calm and undaunted. From accused, they turned into accusers who strongly denounced traitor Nguyen Van Thieu. On behalf of his mates, Nguyen Duy Thong read a strong protest to the dictatorial and fascist actions of the Thieu clique. He called on the students, pupils and other strata of the people to rise up to shatter their repressive machinery. The other students and pupils also took turns in denouncing Thieu's inhuman tortures against them. After that, they slashed their wrists and with the blood wrote on the walls slogans pressing for their immediate release. They also shouted slogans against Thieu's fascist moves and sang anti-war songs.

The same day, the Saigon Students' General Association decided a three-day strike against the Thieu clique's illegal trial of the above-mentioned ten students.

o Many workers' trade unions in Saigon are carrying on their battle for wage increase and against sacking. The unions at the RMK-BRJ are preparing an action against the dismissal without severance pay of 20,000 workers. The Saigon Federation of Trade Unions stated that 100,000 workers would go on strike should the Labour Ministry not intercede with their bosses to re-adjust minimum and basic wages. It put forward three claims :

— do away with the gap between fixed wages and soaring prices :

— increase workers' wages ;

— set minimum wages for workers in production bases.

o On March 17, after receiving no satisfaction of their repeated claims for a pay rise, 5,000 stevedores at the Saigon wharf went on strike, bringing the docks to a standstill.

The next day, the US Saigon were forced to comply with eheir requests.

o On March 15, Le Hien Dang, former deputy head of the Executive Committee of the University Autonomy Movement, and secretary general of the Saigon-Gia Dinh People's Revolutionary Committee sent a letter to the South Viet Nam students and pupils to condemn the US-Saigon arrest of 15 intellectuals and savage torturing of student Huynh Tan Mam before handing him over to the American CIA. The letter stirringly called upon all students and pupils to side with their South Viet Nam fellow-countrymen and intellectuals, and to struggle for the complete withdrawal of US troops and for the release of 15 intellectuals, Mam and all students and pupils still in jail.

o The South Viet Nam Federation of Students for Liberation sent a letter to the International Union of Students calling upon it and all friendly bodies and progressive students throughout the world to strongly condemn the US-Saigon inhuman treatment of Huynh Tan Mam, and to press for his and all other detained youths' immediate freedom.

o On the morning of March 23, the Thieu clique was compelled to postpone the trial of Mrs Ngo Ba Thanh, President of the Women's Movement for the Right to Live, before the so-called Military Court of the Third Tactical Zone. At present, as her health is seriously declining she is being treated in an hospital under police surveillance.

o On March 10, the American warrant officer at the Phu Lam radar station (Saigon) threatened to sack 35 women-workers in case of disobedience. As the latter protested, he called in the US military police who assaulted one of them. In protest, all the women-workers at the station walked out from March 10 to 13.

NO RESPITE FOR THE US-THIEU

IN their losing position and utter isolation, the warlike clique in Saigon headed by Nguyen Van Thieu has further exposed its fascist and anti-national colours. Along with the scraping of manpower and resources for US "Vietnamization," it has been inflicting all possible brutalities on the movement for peace, withdrawal of US troops and formation in South Viet Nam of a government of national concord. Dozens of intellectuals have been arbitrarily arrested in Saigon, Hue and Dalat. Hundreds of students, schoolpupils and their representatives have been jailed and savagely tortured. Many leaders of mass organizations, religious and charity bodies and opposition groups have been constantly harassed or arrested. Student quarters in Saigon and Hue have been dissolved, encircled or blockaded and student associations' seats ransacked or looted. Many cultural evenings sponsored by students have been banned or interfered with. Many pagodas and places of worship of Buddhist believers have been searched and endangered. Newspaper confications have been frequent and publishers fined and threatened. Editors and journalists of opposition papers have been fined, given prison terms, and not a few of them manhandled. Most dastardly has been the attack and destruction of orphanages with gunshots and missiles.

US-Thieu crimes have fanned up the anger of the urban population. Popular protest has been mounting in many cities and provincial and district capitals across South Viet Nam. Thirty-two peace movements, and many mass, religious and political organizations in Saigon and Hue have issued series of statements laying bare Thieu's crimes and fascist moves which thwart the legitimate aspirations of the entire people and serve the US scheme to prolong its war of aggression in South Viet Nam.

These statements also have expressed firm determination to join forces with people from all walks of life in various cities and towns in militating for genuine peace and national independence, US troops withdrawal, Thieu's resignation and dissolution of the Saigon regime's machine of coercion.

Most ebullient and most resolute of all has been the courageous, persistent, ingenious and creative movement of students and school pupils. The class boycott and the raid on the police HQ in Tuy Hoa city by thousands of high-school students of Phu Yen province on March 10, the big demonstrations of thousands of students and pupils which produced a stir in Hue city on March 14 and 15, the strike by 6,000 students of the Saigon Faculty of Letters on March 18, the staunchness displayed by 10 students and pupils who lashed out against the traitorous nature of fascist dictator Nguyen Van Thieu right before a military court on March 23, etc. have been hard blows at the criminal schemes and moves of the US-fostered and US-backed Nguyen Van Thieu distatorial regime. The unequivocal statement of student Vo Nhu Lanh, President of the General Association of Van Hanh students, that he "will not bow out before his term expires" the unanimous choice by all 6th-year medical students in Saigon of Huynh Tan Mam as their chief representative although the latter had been kidnapped and taken to an unknown place, the successful holding of a week of exhibition of "the genocidal crimes of the US imperialists" by the Hue General Assocation of Students have been eloquent proofs of the iron determination of the urban youth to battle for independence and peace, and for the right to be free to study and put their skill and their knowledge at the service of the nation.

Together with the powerful struggle of the students and pupils, the 6-day (March 11-16) demonstration staged by tens of thousands of people of all strata of Binh Dinh province with the participation of nearly 90 per cent of the Saigon armymen stationed in the area against the detention and torturing to death of Buddhist girl Huynh Thi Hien by Thieu's agents was a new development in the mass movement against terror and repression in areas still under enemy control.

The harsher the repression is the stronger and the more resolute popular opposition will be. The pressing demands of the South Vietnamese people are independence, peace, immediate withdrawal from South Viet Nam of all US troops, weapons and war means, Thieu's resignation, dissolution of the US-Thieu machine of coercion from central to grassroots level, and formation of a government of national concord embracing all forces really desiring peace and independence who will, together with the PRG of the RSVN, settle South Viet Nam's internal affairs.

FILE ON US CRIMES

THE US-Saigon troops recently conducted several raids and US aircraft bombed and strafed, or sprayed noxious chemicals on, many places in South Viet Nam.

+ B.52 planes taking off from Thailand and Guam repeatedly attacked many areas of Quang Nam, Quang Tri, Thua Thien, Komtum, Pleiku... Thousands of tons of bombs were daily rained on populated areas.

+ Tactical aircraft also intensified their bombings, rocketings and chemical poison sprays against villages and hamlets, ricefields and orchards.

+ On March 10, in only 2 hours (from 8 to 10 oclock), US planes raided Vinh Hoa Hung village (Go Quao district), dumped toxic chemicals in high doses on 5 miles along both sides of the Cai Be and Cai Lon rivers. Then on March 13, they also sprayed poisonous substances on 7 km along both sides of Nuoc Trong River in Vinh Vien and Hoa Lieu villages (Long My district, Can Tho province)...

According to preliminary statistics, 7,200 houses were burned down, 1,007 people killed, 326 intoxicated and sent to hospital, a great many other civilians and 12,607 draught and domestic animals were affected by toxic chemicals.

Along with air assaults, the US-Saigon troops have increased "pacification" operations, massacred people and reduce their houses to ashes. On February 5, a major action by Saigon troops with US air support was mounted in Que Son district (Quang Nam province). The raiders shot dead 24 civilians, arrested 30 others and taken 25 people to an unknown destination. In a raid last February 24 on Xuan Loc, 40 miles east of Saigon, the enemy murdered 29 civilians on their way to the ricefields, wounded 52 others and took into custody 76 people whom they called "prisoners of war."

Saigon civil guard company 859 in Kien Tuong district in a sweep on February 27, wantonly opened fire on the villagers, mowing down 17 of them including 5 old women and one 3-year-old child, and wounding 15 others.

On the night of March 5, US-Saigon troops in Quang Ngai, swept Ban Thach hamlet, Pho Cuong village (Duc Pho district), shot dead at one time 20 children playing on the ground. After that, the raiders threw their corpses into a house and set it afire. They also killed 17 people and abducted about 100 others.

On March 10, a Saigon army unit commanded by 2 Yanks, raided Duc Thuan village, Tho Duc District (Quang Ngai province), set afire at a time 100 houses...

While the villagers were trying to extinguish the fire, the soldiers indiscriminately shot at them, killing or wounding many. A 79-year-old man named Nguyen Duong, was tortured and seriously injured and two women, Le Thi Huong, 68, and Ho Thi Lang, 65, were also brutalized.

On the Counter-Pacification Front

SOUTH VIET NAM'S rural areas have become in the past many years a real front, a full-fledged war front. Between the people on the one hand, and the American invaders and their hirelings on the other, a tough confrontation has been going on in all the political, military, economic and cultural fields.

An incredible stamina

A South Vietnamese hamlet is a small stretch of land of a few dozen hectares lying along a river, canal, stream, or road. There a thousand or so people of labouring families live in houses scattered amidst orchards or paddies, under the foliage of trees green all the year round. Life seems to be that of one large family whose members know one another very well.

The American war of aggression has ruined South Vietnamese hamlets and turned its people's life into one of blood and tears. Flattening huts and levelling cultivable lands with bulldozers to force their owners into concentration areas, B.52 carpet bombings, daily arrest, torture, deportation and killing — the enemy have never run short of any atrocities to worsen the lot of the inhabitants. No family, nobody, over the last ten years and more, has been spared. On two-thirds of the territory, a French journalist wrote after visiting the South Vietnamese countryside, behind hamlets concentrated on the coastal areas, paddies and forest were burnt, and the land dotted with bomb craters and the vegetation defoliated — a horrible scene to all those who cross Viet Nam from the 17th parallel to the Ca Mau point. (*L'Express*, Oct. 1971). More vicious still is the policy of using Vietnamese to kill Vietnamese, of dividing or fomenting hatred among people of the same village, even of the same family, of forming "civil guards," and — as noticed by the *New York Times* (April 1971) — of forcing women into combat units and boys and girls of seven upward to join support units in order to fight against patriots. South Vietnamese peasants have endured such ordeals with an extraordinary will power in a fierce and drawn-out confrontation.

A heroic land

The history of South Viet Nam's rural areas since 1960 has been that of the tough battle against pacification plans. The battlefield has been each house, each plot of orchard and paddy, and the soldier everybody—girls, boys, old men and women of the hamlet. The Americans and their hirelings have had to dispute each bit of land with the peasant. But their opponent is undaunted, fired by hatred for them, and full of imagination. An old man of My Tho province killed several pacification agents with poisoned arrows. A young peasant of the U Minh jungle used a rocket to sink an adverse ship one day after he had taken it from a downed helicopter. In their confrontation with the enemy for the defence of their villages, against the erasing of their houses and devastation of their gardens, women of Ben tre province employ knives and machetes to fight off pacification agents. More generally the South Vietnamese peasants resist pacification with arms in hand, with political actions and agitation among adverse troops which they call "the three spearheads." Women too take part in this battle in the ranks of the "long-haired army." A new category of families has emerged in rural areas — the "unfortunate families" members of which have been impressed and forced to take up arms against their own fellow-countrymen. They make up a veritable "army" with a highly persuasive power among officers and men of the Saigon army whom they make it a duty to win over to the people's side. Country folk fight overtly and covertly with all the strength of their hatred for the enemy and of their confidence in their own victory. Their battle unfolds with utmost fierceness, now on a visible front, now on an invisible one. The outcome of this kind of war does not depend on the quantity of arms and ammunition, but rather on man's heart and mind. In this life-and-death struggle the intelligence and courage of each fighter is put to the hardest test.

In three years of office, the Nixon administration has used a larger tonnage of bombs and shells in South Viet Nam than the one expended by the US in World War II and the Korean War put together. Toxic chemicals have destroyed foodcrops on millions of hectares, affected hundreds of thousands of people and invalidated thousands of women and children. This deluge of munitions has not been able however to help the aggressors materialize their dark designs. Instead, all pacification moves have been checked by the people's "three spearheads," and all pacification plans have had to be started over again. In point of fact, rural pacification, the main measure of Nixon's Vietnamization, is going bankrupt in the hamlets of indomitable South Viet Nam.

The people's control

By every means, the American aggressors and their henchmen force the South Vietnamese peasants to leave their native villages for concentration camps dubbed "strategic hamlets." Should the population of a hamlet to be pacified according to plan, refuse to move away, American troops have but to bomb it to rubble (*The New Yorker*, Jan. 22, 1971). A then colonel in charge of pacification in Military Area II, P. Vann, admitted: our job is not pacification but rural occupation by military means. Nevertheless we can't submit the population nor ensure security. A Saigon senator wrote late in March 1971 in *Dien Tin*: "Security can be lost in a few moments. Overnight a great many villages and hamlets can be downgraded from A to E. Can they speak of control over 99,1% of the population? Percentage means nothing at all in this people's war, a war with neither forefront nor rear base." The Saigon senator added: "Pacification by security standards (while security can be lost at any time) or by control standards (while control is just apparent) — that is a sandbank on which nothing lasting and stable can be built." Small wonder that many Western journalists have altered their viewpoint on "rural control" on which they once trusted Thieu and his American advisers' evaluation system. Now, in their opinion, "the hamlets are worn-out" Saigon's "control is flimsy," "40 per cent of garrisons have been recently lost," because their defenders "opened them to the Viet Cong," "the Thieu government is unpopular," and "the Front remains a strong political force in rural areas." It is safe to say that the US has proved unable to submit the people and land of valiant South Viet Nam although it has paid too high a price for it: over 200 billion dollars and several hundred thousand Americans killed and wounded.

The war of our people for control of the territory, for democratic freedoms and a better life has been going on with extreme fierceness and diverse combat methods from one year to another.

Despite the enemy's efforts to extend their grip, the rural population unremittingly rise up to seize control step by step, bit by bit, from one field to another. Where they have set up a dense garrison network the people have established control in varying degrees. It is a fact that in a number of hamlets where the coercive machine still remains intact, the people's control is almost complete, since there the organizers and leaders of the population are not the quisling authorities but the NFL and the PRG. Control over the hamlets is a right that should lie defenitely in the hands of the South Vietnamese people.

THANH HONG

Pham Cao Thuong, a young commander of the South Viet Nam PLAF

Mr Nixon's "Serious Negotiation"...

(Continued from page 1)

of US forces and those of the other foreign countries in the US camp.., the parties will at the same time agree on the modalities:

a) of the withdrawal in safety from South Viet Nam of the totality of US forces and those of the other foreign countries in the US camp.;

b) of the release of the totality of militarymen of all parties and civilians captured in the war (including American pilots captured in North Viet Nam) so that they may rapidly return to their homes."

In its Feb. 2, 1972 statement the RSVN PRG again insisted that "the US government set a specific terminal date for the complete withdrawal of all US troops, advisers, military personnel, weapons and war materials and those of the other foreign countries in the US camp from South Viet Nam without posing any condition whatsoever. This specific terminal date will also be the date for the release of all militarymen of the parties concerned and of the civilians captured in the war (including the US pilots captured in North Viet Nam)."

How has up to now Mr Nixon responded to the offer? Why has he kept mum and set no date for the total withdrawal of US troops while arrogating to himself the right to ask the "enemy" to respond to his own suggestions on the "POW's." Can this be called "serious negotiations?"

His ballyhoo on the "POW" issue is far from being an indication of his concern for the latter. To achieve a thorough settlement of this issue, what he should do is to put an end to the war and withdraw totally and unconditionally US troops from South Viet Nam. Reversely, so long as he continues his war of aggression, be this under a "Vietnamized" form, the US "POW" list can only be lengthened, and as a result the POW problem can find no solution. Mr Nixon seems to pay no heed to this rationale. He may raise the "POW" issue, he may "pray" for the POWs, all this is but a smokescreen for his war prolongation and expansion in Indochina and his sordid intention to undermine the Paris talks.

In evoking the POW problem, Mr Nixon also wants to play on the sentiments of the American people and to exhibit his "humanitarianism" with a view to hustling votes in the next presidential elections. That is the real aim of his move. He should bear all responsibility for its dangerous consequences.

ANY progress of the Paris Conference depends finally upon both sides' willingness to negotiate. As far as the RSVN PRG is concerned, it has sent its representatives to Paris, put forward successive peace proposals both reasonable and sensible, which may serve as sound bases for the settlement of the South Viet Nam issue and for the restoration of peace in Viet Nam.

What the South Vietnamese people have at heart is peace, a peaceful settlement in Viet Nam, a prompt repatriation of GIs to their homes. They have on many occasions displayed their goodwill for peace, but they are also fully determined to carry on their patriotic resistance to US aggression until final victory. Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom. "So long as there remains on our soil a single aggressor, we fight on and drive him away."

SOUTH VIET NAM

in our liberated zones

o President Huynh Tan Phat has recently sent a message of sympathy to the Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, in connexion with the Minsk Radio factory accident involving losses in lives and property.

o On the occasion of the 51st founding anniversary of the Mongolian People's Army, the RSVN Defence Minister has sent a message of greeting to his Mongolian counterpart.

o The spokesman of the RSVN Foreign Ministry has recently published a protest against the US imperialists and Saigon administration's intensified aggression against Cambodia. The statement partly said: "The people and RSVN PRG strongly denounce the US imperialists' stepped-up aggression against Cambodia, fully support the March 25, 1972 statement of the spokesman of the Royal Government of the National Union of Cambodia, insist that the Nixon administration stop its intervention in, and aggression against Cambodia, pull cut immediately, totally and unconditionally the Saigon troops, the American and satellite military advisers and personnel from Cambodia.

o The South Viet Nam Liberation Federation of Trade Unions sent on March 19 and 23 a delegation to the 15th Congress of the USSR Trade Unions. The South Viet Nam Liberation Youth Union addressed greetings to the Congress of Youths on Environment in Stockholm. The South Viet Nam Peace Committee was represented by a delegation headed by Nguyen Van Than, Vice-Chairman of the Committee, at the symposium on imperialism, independence and social reforms in the present world, held in New Delhi from March 24 to 29, 1972.

o Last week, the South Viet Nam Liberation Students' Union wrote a letter to the International Youth Federation, denouncing the US-Thieu arrest and savagely torturing of Huynh Tan Mam, President of the Saigon General Union of Students. The Association for the Welfare of Mothers and Children, the Women's Union, the Youth Union and the Liberation Pupils' Federation in Central Trung Bo denounced in a joint statement before public opinion at home and abroad the Nguyen Van Thieu clique's shooting dead or wounding of 20 young pioneers and children in Ban Thach hamlet, Pho Cuong village, Duc Pho district, Quang Ngai province.

• In mid-March 1972, the Representation of the RSVN PRG in West Nam Bo (South Viet Nam proper) issued instructions on the propaganda on, and development of, the successes of the regional army and people in the past period, and held discussions on army heroe's feats cadres, fighters, office employees and people in West Nam Bo.

• The Saigon-Cholon-Gia Dinh Liberation Women's Union has recently convened a Conference of cadres to review last year's work and discuss its guidelines and tasks for 1972.

The report on the 1971 work review read by Madame Nguyen Thi Thang, President of Saigon-Cholon-Gia Dinh Women's Union, said in part: "In US 'Vietnamization', Saigon women have fallen victims to 3 great misfortunes: exploitation, family burden, which they have to bear alone, their husbands and sons being drafted into Thieu's army, depravation of their children.

The report further pointed out that "as their dignity and family happiness have been prejudiced and their children perverted, the Saigon women's movement has now become another spearhead, with characteristics of its own and an extensive influence on women of various walks of life in the South Viet Nam cities..."

As for the guidelines and tasks for 1972, the conference voiced its resolve to push ahead the Saigon women's actions to live up to their role as a spearhead in the struggle against US-Thieu, thus contributing with other people in Saigon and throughout South Viet Nam to the eventual foiling of US criminal "Vietnamization."

o In late last February and mid-March, people in Cai Lay district (My Tho) prevented enemy devastation of over 1,400 hectares of paddies and cut or dredged over 12 miles of irrigation canals. Over 3,000 people under adverse strict control succeeded in returning to the liberated zone to continue production or the fighting.

o In the first 2 months of 1972, 9 villages in Mo Cay district and a number of other villages in Ben Tre province trained 30 teachers in a crash course, opened 31 classes and admitted over 3,000 pupils to primary education for the 1972-1973 school year.

The water lily-shaped hat

"Your silhouette walks past, and
your water lily-shaped hat
Oh the supple linen hat, as lovely
as a small hand...
Stronger than any bombs and shells,
striking fear into the Pentagon!"

TO HUU

IN the present sacred resistance of the South Vietnamese people against US aggression, for national salvation, the water lily-shaped hat has become something very dear to the revolutionaries. It is all the dearer to the first armed groups of the National Front for Liberation in the first days of the resistance. We can meet the simple and lovely hat right in the rushing of enemy posts with rudimentary weapons in Tua Hai and Phuoc Thanh (East Nam Bo) and in the resounding counter-raid battles in Quan Cung Hill (the Plain of Reeds). The water lily-shaped hat of green colour of the Vietnamese paddy fields and gardens has gone together with the famous Battalion 502 and in the insurgent people in the torch-lit nights of the Plain of Reeds during the earthshaking popular uprising in Ben Tre province. Ever since the hat has, like the man and his shadow, been always by the side of the liberation armymen during the resounding battles at Ap Bac, Binh Gia, Ba Gia, Dong Xoai, Nui Thanh, Van Tuong, Plei Me, Bau Bang, Tay Ninh, in the Mekong Delta ... The proud water lily-shaped hat has also become a inseparable companion of the ever victorious units of the heroic Liberation Army on various paths of the country, in the confrontation with the US-puppets on different battlefronts. It made its appearance as early as in the grim years of the "denounce Communists" campaign of the US-Diem clique, then in the "special war," the "local war" and the present criminal "Vietnamization" of the war of the US-Thieu clique.

Like the liberation armymen who have always lived amidst the tender care and love of the South Vietnamese people, the water lily-shaped hat has won a special place in the heart of the Vietnamese people throughout the country.

On February 15, 1961, the South Viet Nam Liberation Armed Forces were unified. That is an unforgettable historic date for the South Vietnamese patriots who have been forced to take up arms in a second resistance war. In the solemn lines of the liberation armymen clad in their khaki uniforms in olive green—the green colour of their native lands—the water lily-shaped hat which the armymen have carefully and graciously adorned with some twigs of camouflage, seems to strengthen the posture of those who are ready to make every sacrifice in a life-and-death struggle against the enemy to liberate the whole of the national territory and wrest back full independence and freedom for the country.

The growth and maturity of the Liberation Armed Forces has seen glorious landmarks through various stages of the resistance. These are the congresses of heroes, model and valiant fighters held at various levels across South Viet Nam. These congresses which are the rallying points of the outstanding sons of the people representing all the three kinds of armed forces of the mighty People's Liberation Army brought out the unceasing growth of the holy people's war against US aggression, for national salvation of the South Vietnamese people.

Here the water lily-shaped hat has given a still better shine to the young faces which have darkened in the rains and wind and hardened in the test of fire. The water lily-shaped hat slung to the gun muzzle of the liberation combatant whose eyes shine with energy and confidence gives a better expression to the determination of its owner to win every battle engaged and score ever bigger records in fighting.

In their fight to defend and liberate their beloved fatherland, the South Vietnamese people will engrave for ever in their mind the *Spring of 1968*, the spring of the General Offensive and Widespread Uprising. It was a spring when the fourteen million people of the South struck terror into the ranks of the US and puppets and brought immense joy and confidence to their friends in all continents. This historic event had completely changed the situation of the war against the US aggression and asserted the inevitable final victory of the heroic South Vietnamese armed forces and people.

In those memorable days of the national history, the people in Saigon, Hue and other towns in South Viet Nam, who were living under the oppressive atmosphere of US-puppet occupation, streamed out into the streets and gave a hearty, excited welcome to the returning liberation fighters, hugging them tightly as if they were their dear ones. In the flame of the ensuing fierce battles engulfing all the streets, markets and villages, the liberation combatants with a water lily-shaped hat has become a dear image leaving indelible memories in the mind of the people who love their liberators as much as they hate the arrogant Yankees and their running dogs.

The fight of the South Vietnamese people has the full support of those in the great rear who are ready to do everything for the front and for the defeat of American aggression. The road to the front are stirring with the footsteps of so many contingents of boys and girls in the Volunteers Brigade with beaming faces. And here, too, the water lily-shaped hat seems to provide an ever-present shade to the combatants going endless streams to the fore-front.

What an inspiring sight to see the little boys, those future liberation fighters with the water lily-shaped hat on their heads, proudly and merrily flocking to their modest but revolutionary schools built in the resistance bases, braving the continuat and ferocious bombings and shellings. We have the right and good reasons to believe that these young shoots of the country when grown up will not hesitate to take up arms to continue the fight against foreign aggression for another generation in defence of their native land and their national territory if there still remains even a single aggressor.

THU HIEN

A fighter with the water lily-shaped hat: Premier Fidel Castro

ANECDOTES TOLD BY LIBERATION FIGHTERS

A quick boy

LIKE all children in West Nam Bo, Hai, a 12-year-old boy, was very fond of the liberation fighters. Once, when he was fishing with his father in the ricefields, he saw a man running at full speed towards a bush. Then he heard a burst of gun shots and saw that his faher fell hit by a bullet. He ran to him to help him up but the latter was dead, his body drenched in blood. He then saw a group of Saigon soldiers rush in. Without even a glance at the dead man, they curtly asked the boy: "Did you see a Vietcong running past here? Answer quick or we'll give you a good hiding!"

Hai at once realized that the enemy were in hot pursuit of the "liberation fighter" he had just seen and that his father had been killed by a stray shot from them.

Controlling his anger and pain, Hai thought out a trick: braving the soldiers' bluster he clung to them, wept bitterly and demanded damages for his father's death. Not being able to wring any information from him, the mercenaries went away. When they had vanished, Hai went in search of the liberation man.

He learned that Ba, the liberation fighter, had been caught in an encirclement and had spent his last shot on them before fleeing.

Hai told the figther to lie in his boat, covered him with straw and put the corpse of his father on him. He then rowed the boat under the very noses of the Saigon troops thronging both river banks.

When the liberation fighter was out of harm's way, Hai returned to his hamlet and related that his father had been killed by "government soldiers." People came to see his father for the last time and bury him; the crowd was so big that it became a protest rally.

TRAN THU
Liberation fighter in West Nam Bo

A plane downed with a single shot

DINH THI DONG was beside herself with joy as she was the first Ka Tu girl to be admitted to the guerilla unit of Phuoc Gia village. She took great care of her firearm and went in for a tough drill. Besides the regular sessions with her mates, she practiced in spare time at birds and trees in the forest, fired by the motivation to do something about the US planes constantly getting at her village's crops and huts.

One Autumn morning, her mother and she were working in the field when they saw two planes circling over their heads. She thought perhaps they had spotted them both as they thundered down to strike.

Dong told her mother to take refuge in the jungle and leave her alone to confront the sky pirates. The old woman refused to go. She even prevented her daughter from shooting, saying: "You cannot face them alone. There are two of them."

"Don't worry, mom," she answered. "I am a guerilla and have the duty to defend the population. Not to fight them is a crime."

Upon these words, she aimed her gun at one of the planes and let off a shot. The air marauder took fire and left behind a trail of black smoke.

"What a shot you are, darling!" her mother congratulated her and shouted: "It is crashing!"

The second aircraft took fright and turned tail.

In a festival held in Quang Nam province, Dinh Thi Dong was awarded an "anti-aircraft valiant fighter" badge and the "anti-US valiant fighter" title.

NGUYEN VAN T.
Militia team head, Phuoc Gia village, Quang Nam province

Capture of a whole group of Saigon troops

AFTER a day of violent sweep which left hamlet X in a shroud of thick smoke of gun powder, at nightfall, life returned to normal. Standing at the foot of a truncated cocotree, I observed the movement of the enemy, wondering whether they had withdrawn. Anyhow I had an appointment with comrade Quang, a Front militant, that very night. I made up my mind to enter the hamlet to see for myself. After concealing my papers and documents, I made for the hamlet, a pistol firm in my hand.

A deadly silence. Not even a dim light. Arriving at the gate of the hamlet, I raised my voice: "Anybody there!"

No answer. Perhaps the enemy was in there, I thought to myself. Anyhow, it was too late to go back now. With calm, I repeated the question in a more energetic voice: "Is there any soldier here?"

"Yes, there is," a voice was heard from a corner of the dark courtyard.

"Which side?", I asked unruffled.

"Government."

Composing my countenance, I walked straight to the guard and pointed my pistol at him:

"Put down your gun," I shouted.

Taken unawares, the man meekly complied. From what he said. I understood that the enemy group consisting of nine men commanded by an NCO was scouting for a battalion targeted that night by the liberation forces for annihilation.

"Stay put," I warned him. "All avenue of escape is blocked. Any resistance on your part will be duly punished."

I tied him to a tree and went in search of the guerillas when I saw comrade Quang and another man coming up. I reported the situation to them and suggested that we try to capture the whole unit. With their agreement, we formed two spearheads, secretly drew near the house in which the enemy troops were plunged in a sound sleep.

I shouted an order: "Don't stir if you want to live. You're tightly encircled by the liberation fighters. It would be the death of you if you resisted!"

"We surrender!" someone answered.

I told them to lay down their weapons and to leave the house in groups of three. I asked one of our men to take charge of the prisoners and collect the booty. When he replied: "Very well!"., the Saigon soldiers frightened as they believed we were in great numbers, came out into the yard in groups as ordered. Their arms bound up, they submissively followed our men into captivity.

That was how we captured a whole group of soldiers of Saigon Regiment 54 in full kit, without firing a shot.

THANH LE
Scout of the regional unit of Phu Vang district, Thua Thien province

the DRVN in brief

o The Central Committee of the Ho Chi Minh Working Youth Union held in Hanoi a memorial ceremony for hero Ly Tu Trong.

After laying a wreath, Pham Loi, assistant secretary of the Hanoi branch of the Union recalled the three tasks of the youth namely: fight heroically, work zealously, study efficiently.

o The Commission of Investigation on the US Imperialists War Crimes in Viet Nam has just made public a document on the crimes committed by the Americans in their air war against Viet Nam.

The document condemned the US imperialists for crimes of genocide, of annihilation of life and environments in Viet Nam, particularly in the South.

o The deaf-mutes lose their sense since their childhood, when their faculty of speech has not yet developed to the full.

At present this defect is cured in the world by phonetic methods.

In North Viet Nam, after a careful preparation for laying the foundations of the phonetic branch, the Otorhino-laryngological Institute has step by step studied the condition of the deaf-mutes and the causes of their defect; it has opened a pilot course for children from 6 to 12 years of age.

o For a decade now, small propeller-planes have been used in North Viet Nam for the prospection of subsoil resources and have detected the presence of many kinds of ores such as: iron, copper, lead, tin, zinc, chromium pyrites, antimony, graphite, coal, building materials, radio-active elements, etc. Many ores have been carefully studied for eventual exploitation.

o The fishing co-operative at Cang Duong, Quang Trach district, Quang Binh province, has netted a fish 332 inches in length; 84 inches in height and 48 inches in breadth, weighing 2.5 tons (the liver alone weighs 650 pounds). The meat of this grey scaleless fish is delicious to eat.

o The Vietnamese archaeologists have found in excavations at Go Mun, Lam Thao district, Vinh Phu province a copper sickle of the Hung period. It has a broad V-shape, an inside edge and a part for the handle which fits in nicely. This detail indicates our ancestors' painstaking designing of tools on the basis of a fairly developed agriculture.

o After a two-week visit to the DRVN, at the invitation of the Vietnamese Musicians' Association and the Viet Nam Committee of Solidarity with the Americans, pop singer Pete Seeger, has left for home.

During his stay in North Viet Nam, the American artiste visited some cultural and historical vestiges, beauty spots and the land of the *quan ho* folk song in Bac Ninh. He composed on this occasion the "Land of One Thousand Songs" in praise of our country and the determination of our people to defend their Fatherland and their pleassant life.

A newly set-up unit of the Cambodian PLAF

Cambodia :

NLAF WAVES OF OFFENSIVES

THE Cambodian NLAF launched on March 1st a new series of offensives on all battlefields to level adverse positions West, East, North and South of Siem Reap city, wiping out enemy troops taking part in the engagements and completely liberating the said city, according to *AKI*.

The Siem Reap liberation fighters put out of action 250 adverse men including a company written off in an ambush laid on March 1st on the road linking Sasasdam to Puok. In a battle which lasted only a few minutes, they killed a captain, captured 5 men, seized 50 fire-arms and a wireless set and destroyed 2 military vehicles.

On the Siem Reap battlefield, the Cambodian patriotic forces assaulted the CP of Brigade 29 stationed at Siem Reap college, and shelled other enemy positions including the biggest barrack near the Siem Reap bungalow, the camps in Sal Sanniset, near the power station and the province chief's residence. The Siem Reap airport and the position in Saus village also came under NLAF fire.

Also on March 1st, a detachment of enemy troops and the CP of Brigade 9 in Svay Thom were battered and suffered hundreds of casualties.

In short, in 13 days ending March 5, the NLAF in Kompong Thom were responsible for over 1,500 enemy casualties, captured many others, overran 7 among 9 important positions and a number of posts, and seized a big quantity of war materials.

Especially on the last days of March, the Cambodian patriotic forces mounted repeated attacks around Phnom Penh. According to foreign reports, an ammunition dump of the Saigon army, 43 km South-West of Phnom Penh, was completely destroyed on March 20, and another depot, 50 km South-East of the Cambodian capital seriously damaged. On the same day, the Phnom Penh troops were intercepted on Highway 15 and the garrison in Prey Veng city was besieged.

On March 21, the NLAF mounted a fierce shelling on the Pochengtong airbase and other military positions in Phnom Penh. Western reports disclosed that about 200 shells had fallen on the targets, especially on the Pochentong airport, the most important airbase of the Lon Nol, Sirik-Matak-Son Ngoc Thanh traitorous clique, comprising numerous military installations and camps for various army units. The Phnom Penh army command made known that the international signal centre has also been raided by the NLAF. According to initial reports by Western news agencies, a helicopter, a reconnaissance plane and many other aircraft were destroyed or damaged, the main sector of the Pochentong signal centre was put out of action, and the lieutenant-colonel, head of the centre killed. Traffic at the airport was brought to a standstill, and the telegraphic connections were cut off. The defence ministry seat inside the city was hit by 2 rockets.

Western sources further reported that on March 23, two naval craft loaded with supplies and anchored off the Phnom Penh port were assaulted with plastic charges. One of them, a petroleum-carrier was sent to the bottom and another, a cargo ship seriously damaged.

On the night of March 22, many enemy positions in Prey Veng city continued to be targets of NLAF offensives, and several others along Highway 15 linking Prey Veng city to Neak Luong ferry also came under rep ated attacks. On March 24 the patriotic forces had blew up Chruoy Changwar Bridge linking Phnom Penh city to its suburbs, West of Tonle Sap.

Laos :

PEOPLE'S LIBERATION FORCES LIBERATE SAM THONG

ON March 11, the Lao PLF liberated Sam Thong where 600 adverse troops were wiped out, 5 aircraft shot down, and a large quantity of weapons captured, including 7 heavy guns and mortars.

After kicking the enemy off Heights 1476, 1468, 1300 and 1263 around Sam Thong, the patriotic forces struck at the remnants regrouped to the south-west on March 12. About 40 mercenaries were killed or captured. At the same time PLA units forced the evacuation of Height 1863 north-east of Long Cheng. All through the three following days beginning March 13, they pounded enemy positions at Phu Moc and in the centre of Long Cheng, setting afire an ammunition dump. They occupied several heights at Phu Moc, beat off a counter-attack, grounded 3 aircraft and inflicting a number of casualties.

As a result, adverse morale was seriously affected. A *UPI* dispatch on the 20th said that during the 2nd week of March about 1,000 men of 2 task-force regiments called "mobile groups" rebelled against their commander, General Thao Ly. They accused him of breaking his promise to relieve them. When PLA troops resumed their offensive against Long Cheng, the said task-force men realized there was no more hope for them to go back to Savannakhet. They refused to board planes or spend the night in military camps at Ban Son or Vientiane. They also charged their commander with embezzlement of a large sum due to them. A number of these airlifted to Boum Long late last week for operations in the north of Plain of Jars refused to leave their camps.

In the first three weeks of March, *KPL* reported, according to still incomplete figures, patriotic forces in Southern Laos put out of action over 450 enemy troops, 8 military vehicles and captured a large quantity of material. They struck at positions of the 30th Regiment west of Ban Ngam, beat 2 Thai battalions sent to their rescue, and intercepted an adverse column at Lao Ngam crossroad and another one trying to mount an inroad, 8 miles north of Ban Nhik. In three days, March 18-20, the patriotic forces downed 8 planes, bringing the total of US aircraft destroyed in Laos since May 17, 1964 to 2,326.

Following those reverses, the Pentagon brought the American war of aggression to an unprecedented level. It dispatched nearly 50 B.52s to Utapao, Thailand, and as many to Guam. In concerted actions with hundreds of other planes of various types taking off from other bases in Thailand and aircraft carriers in the Gulfs of Bac Bo and Thailand, every day B.52s dump thousands of tons of bombs on the liberated zone in Laos. Unheard-of crimes have been committed against the population.

The Nixon administration had committed to Laos 20 Thai battalions as shock forces in a long war in Indochina, and rallied the remnants of Vang Pao's troops in a bid to recapture Sam Thong-Long Cheng and other areas, to be soundly beaten at Sam Thong where despite strong cover by the US Air Force, the mercenaries were cut down en masse or fled in disorder, leaving behind intact ordmance pieces.

The Nixon doctrine has thus sustained severe setbacks which to a large extent have foiled the US aggressors and their valets' plot to use Thai and Vang Pao mercenaries as shock troops in their "Laotianization." The reverses have also served a warning on the Thanom Praphas clique.

in brief

o At the 15th Congress of Soviet Trade Unions on March 20, L.I. Brezhnev, Secretary-General of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, said: "The Indochina war recognized by the US President as the longest and most difficult war in US history has shown that the imperialists' policy of aggression against, and repression of, other peoples cannot work. At present, the US is scheming first of all to use native mercenary troops to stamp out the national liberation movements in Indochina and maintain their political and strategic position in this region. Washington calls it 'Vietnamization' of the war."

o Recently, the Czechoslovakia-Bulgaria and Romania-Algeria joint communiqués reaffirmed solidarity with, and all-round support for, the three Indochinese peoples' effort for freedom and national independence, fully backed the 7-point proposal of the RSVN PRG and urged that the US end its aggression and immediately and unconditionally withdraw all its troops from Indochina.

o In Japan, the Trade Unions affiliated to SOHYO are giving a push to the collection of 10 million yens to buy medicines and other necessities for the Vietnamese. Up to now, 7.5 million yens have been collected for the same purpose.

o The Congress of the Painters' Trade Unions in Sweden has adopted a resolution against the US genocidal war in Viet Nam and presented the RSVN PRG with 3,000 kronors.

o Students of Princeton University (US) recently demonstrated against the Nixon administration's stubborn prolongation of the Viet Nam and Indochina wars as Moorer, Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, was coming to the university to plead for the aggression.

The National Peace Action Coalition held a press conference on March 15 in New York to make public the program of the Spring Action for an end to the Viet Nam aggressive war. Addressing the newsmen, Stephanie Coontz, NPAC Co-Chairman and J. Stanley Shaw, President of the Liberal Party of Queens district, denounced the "prisoners' week" initiated by Nixon as a hypocritical trich, and stressed that the only way to bring home all the servicemen captured in the war is an immediate end to the Viet Nam aggressive war with the total and unconditional withdrawal of the GIs from Viet Nam.

in brief

Viet Nam War

Rouses Americans to Action

Al Hubbard at the Versailles Assembly

NOT long ago, with deep emotion we heard the indignant voice raised by an American from the rostrum of the Versailles World Assembly against Nixon's new atrocious war method, in Indochina "the third war", "the technological war" charaterized by the extermination of human life. The protester was Al Hubbard, an ex-Air Force captain sent to Viet Nam to fight the aggressive war of American arms dealers in Indochina and now Chairman of the Viet Nam Veterans Against the War and an executive member of the People's Coalition For Peace and Justice, an anti-war organization embracing many sections of the American people.

It was for me a pleasant surprise to meet Al Hubbard in Hanoi in those days of March when he paid a visit to North Viet Nam.

I clasped his hand, that of "an American who had committed crimes against the Vietnamese people," as he himself put it: "I'am here not to seek redemption or to mend the error because of US involvement in Viet Nam! No. From the bottom of my heart, I can tell my Vietnamese friends that on behalf of the Viet Vets against the war, I am in Viet Nam, like elsewhere on this globe to act for an end to this lousy, unpopular and tragic war. I was with the criminal flights which later I myself condemned as a disgusting, an insane obedience to order. These senseless flights have wakened me up."

Before me Al Hubbard appeared simply as a coloured American, gentle and ingenuous, with a soft and pathetic voice. I got a better understanding of the US imperialists, those cunning war maniacs who had pushed him into "feasts of blood," claimed by Nixon as "America's finest hours."

The conversation settled down in mutual understanding. In a moving tone, Hubbard told me, "I'm unable to converse with your language so as to express all that I want to speak, but I think that with my practical deed, I should be able to make you understand our opposition to the Nixon administration." He asked us to see a film he had brought. The film was about the struggle waged by Viet Vets outside the White House in Spring 1971. On the screen, the White House was seen shrouded in a lonesome, gloomy funeral veil. The streets were thronged with cars. Viet Vets walking on crutches or moving in wheel-chairs showed up at a rally in front of the Executive Mansion. They wore their combat fatigues and carried toy-rifles. They staged scenes of GI slaughter in Viet Nam. Children, women, old men presumedly killed by GI's littered the ground. The narrator sarcastically called it facts about Americans' defending the freedom and self-determination of the South Vietnamese. Al Hubbard was filmed addressing an anti-war rally in front of the Capitol. Followed a lively scene of officers and men, veterans of the Viet Nam war who successively took the floor to stigmatize Nixon and return their medals out of a feeling of outrage at the disservice they did to their country, as these had been soaked with the blood of the Vietnamese people. The film ended with a sit-in demonstration outside the White House and the scene of hermetically closed vans carrying war veterans to prison camps — the symbol of the police state and Nixon's fascist nature.

Al Hubbard showed us newspapers run by anti-war GI's and leaflets, posters and pictures about the crimes and aspects of the war termed by Nixon as Vietnamization. He produced 2 leaflets with a circulation larger than any newspaper published in the States. The first showed immense rice fields in Viet Nam and a ploughing woman with flights of aircraft overhead raining down their bomb loads, and bore this caption "Military targets in Viet Nam!"

The second carried a map of Viet Nam with US aircraft roaring in while on the ground, war-weary American soldiers are being pulled out; the footnote says "The truth about the ending of US involvement in Viet Nam."

Al Hubbard recalled an incident which happened on *Thanksgiving Day* in November 1971 at an American church. While Nixon was praying for God blessings to GI's in Viet Nam and bragging about his troop pull-outs and the winding down of the war, Viet Nam Vets asked him what they were to thank him for, since the war, far from ending within 6 months as promised by the president hopeful, was still continuing 3 years after and even extended to Cambodia and Laos. An one-legged war veteran pointed one of his crutches towards Nixon and yelled, "Thanks for this?" Those present angrily shouted, "Nixon the criminal!" The *Thanksgiving Day* ceremony ended with a police charge to clear the way for the US President to drive back to the White House.

What has roused Americans to action? Al Hubbard gave the answer by citing the case of the sister of Alvarez, the first US pilot captured at Quang Ninh, in North Viet Nam, on Aug. 5, 1964. She arrived in Versailles as member of the US delegation. She told everybody there "I very much like to see my brother again, but what I like more, and I am prepared to act for, is an end to the Viet Nam war."

Many of our buddies have been arrested, Hubbard continued, but they felt very proud, because they had militated for an end to the war. Thousands of our friends have been sent to prison, but our thought turns to millions of South Vietnamese who have been slain by bombs and shells, by toxic chemicals, by savage torture, only because they resolutely fought for freedom and justice. The anti-war movement in America has taken Viet Nam as a heroic example to guide its activity. I don't try to dramatize things! But Viet Nam really has awakened American conscience.

The wife of a captured US pilot received a letter from her husband from Hanoi. The pilot told his wife that he had been given good treatment and good care. She was deeply moved. She saw in newspapers pictures of Vietnamese children killed by American soldiers and planes. In a big anti-war demonstration on April 2, 1971, she read out her husband's letter and showed the pictures of victimized Vietnamese children, commenting "My husband has been humanely treated — a criminal given good care in Viet Nam. Yet these innocent children, like ours who commit no crime, have been killed on Nixon's orders!"

Al Hubbard also briefed us about the movement for tax evasion in protest against the Viet Nam war. This war has touched off such things as the credibility gap, disrespect for law, anti-draft actions, the national week of disobedience in the armed forces, the Viet Nam moratorium, etc. We see this as acts of conscientious objection, he said. In fact, Nixon has become a president who has lost much of his authority. That the administration has gone fascist amply proves that the law has been flouted. Just as Nixon has complained, "the system is crumbling," for the simple reason that the administration is running into strong popular resistance. With keen interest, Hubbard told of the growth of the anti-war movement in the states, particularly the prospects of this Spring Offensive (April 1972). It is not in the Americans' habit to prophesy, but I'm sure it would be a hot spring anti-war offensive that may rock the United States in this election year.

Glancing at his watch, Hubbard shook his head and said, "Time is pitiless indeed. I would like to tell my Vietnamese friends many more things, but time is running out. I only want to add this: It seems there is some doubt about the anti-war movement in the US. It is even believed that this movement has been defused by Nixon's 8 points. This is a hasty conclusion. For us, Nixon's 8 points are merely a consummate trick in his presidential term of office. It is comparable to his well-known skill at poker. In the states, his 8 points have fallen into oblivion. While the 7 points of the PRG of the RSVN are becoming our program of anti-war action. You may say I have humbled myself too far. The fact is that we are really moved. Your 7 points are a noble gesture. US crimes against Viet Nam are so horrendous and so disgusting that we do not deserve such a treatment. With this sincere feeling, we are working with might and main for the realization of your 7 points. We have decided to join in the Vietnamese people's fight and will not relax our efforts for one minute so long as the Viet Nam war continues."

Saying goodbye to us, Hubbard said with firm confidence, "In a not distant future, I'll land at Tan Son Nhut airport (Saigon). I would then repeat Nixon's words 'This is one of America's finest hours,' but in quite a different sense, for the Americans who will come to Viet Nam at that time are really close friends. The flower of Viet Nam-America friendship that will blossom tomorrow has been grown by us right now with our blood and our energy."

I held his hand rightly in mine, the hand of an American friend, with full understanding and deep emotion. War has fomented and accumulated rancour, but the militant friendship, noble and beautiful, between the nations will put down the flame of war and wash off all traces of hatred.

THANG LOI

Singer Carol Feraci indicting Nixon's Viet Nam war at a reception in the White House